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# THE CATHOLIC LIBRARY WORLD

The Index of Forbidden  
Books

Forbidden Books  
in a High School Library

The Library of the Popes

Book Party for Our Lady

VOL. 17, NO. 4

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## The Catholic Library World

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# The Index of Forbidden Books<sup>1</sup>

By REVEREND EDWARD MAHONEY, O.S.B., B.S. IN L.S.  
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## INTRODUCTION

When Abraham Lincoln met the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, he said, "So this is the young lady who started this great big Civil War." With that remark the wise Lincoln paid fitting tribute to the power of the printed word. For it is well known that the printed word can bring people to good or lure them to evil. Nations at all times have feared the dangers of bad books and have taken some kind of measures to prevent their subjects from reading them. Our United States government refuses second-class mail privileges to the publishers of lascivious and obscene books. Long before the Christian era, heathens as well as Jews had fixed regulations for the suppression of dangerous books and the prevention of corruptive reading.

Holy Mother, the Church, too, has from the very beginning watched over the reading of her children. The first Oecumenical Council of Nicaea, held in 325, not only condemned Arius personally but also condemned his book, *Thalia*, the first book ever condemned by the Church; during the Middle Ages there existed in all its essentials, though without specified clauses, a censorship and prohibition of books throughout the Church.

In the year 1571, St. Pius V called into existence the Sacred Congregation of the

Index to Forbidden Books. For the next three centuries this special Congregation watched over the printed books of the times and issued new indexes whenever the need arose. Usually the forbidden books during that time were on disputed questions of dogmatic theology or books against Faith.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the danger caused by bad books had risen to a degree never thought of before; and it was then that the Church, as always, rose to the occasion in the person of the great Pope, Leo XIII, who issued the famous constitution *Officiorum ac Munerum* on January 25, 1897. This great papal constitution contained forty-nine paragraphs, or articles, which not only prohibited certain classes of books, together with the preventive censorship for the classes, but also had detailed regulations for the application and sanction of the whole law. For some twenty years this constitution was the authoritative measuring stick in regard to bad books.

What was known as the Congregation of the Index was merged in 1917 with the Congregation of the Holy Office, the head or prefect being the Pope himself, who presides in person when important decisions are announced. In this capacity, however, the Pope's decisions are not infallible.

The new Code of Canon Law, which with its 2414 canons is the Church's authoritative legislation in our own day,

1. Paper read at the spring meeting of the Illinois Unit of the Catholic Library Association held in Visitation High School, Chicago, April 14, 1945.

came out the next year. Twenty-four canons, from Canon 1384 to Canon 1405 inclusive and Canons 247 and 2318, contain regulations concerning the censorship and prohibition of books.

#### CONDEMNED BY NAME

Besides the legislation on books, the Congregation of the Holy Office has issued a printed list of forbidden books, under the latest date of 1938, called the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, which is arranged alphabetically according to author and title.

The Reverend Charles A. Hart, Ph.D., in his excellent article in *Catholic Action* for February 1944, entitled "Freedom of the Press and Forbidden Books", calls attention to a common mistake concerning the interpretation of the words *opera omnia* which we see after an author's name. Literally this means *all the works of the author*. "Actually and practically," says Father Hart, "it means the author's works generally or as a whole are under suspicion." Individual works are forbidden only if they would fall within the various classes of forbidden books listed in Canon 1399, or happened to be condemned by a special decree of the Pope or the Congregation of the Holy Office. For instance, we read that all of Anatole France's works are on the Index; i.e., "*Opera omnia*"; but his one title, *The Crime of Sylvester Bonnard*, is not included because it is not in any of the classes prohibited by Canon 1399 and has never been specifically condemned.<sup>2</sup>

A word too, is in order about the Latin phrase, *omnes fabulae amatoriae*, *all the love stories of the author*, which occurs after the names of different authors, such as Alexander Dumas. The Reverend

Ulric Beste, O.S.B., J.C.D., in his commentary, *Introductio in Codicem*, deduces that by such a proscription all other stories of such an author which do not strictly treat of loves, are exempt. Therefore *Count of Monte Cristo* and the *Three Musketeers*, since they are not strictly stories of loves, are not on the Index.<sup>3</sup>

Often the precise reason why a book is condemned is not obvious; indeed, the men who condemn a book do not claim to be infallibly right. They can err; but because they have grave reasons for the prohibition of a book, namely the averting of spiritual harm, the deliberate violation of that prohibition undoubtedly constitutes a serious sin.

When this writer consulted our canonist, the Reverend Raymond Matulenas, O.S.B., J.C.D., about this matter, he said:

"If a reader knows that a book is prohibited by the Holy See and disregards the prohibition by neglecting to obtain permission to read it, he is undoubtedly guilty of mortal sin. Perhaps the matter contained in the book may not cause the reader spiritual harm; nevertheless, he is guilty of sin by his contempt of the prohibition. The Church does not condemn books except for grave reasons. She does not condemn books unless she realizes the objective danger of such books to faith and morals. In view of the fact that the Church does not condemn books arbitrarily, there is no doubt that a serious sin is committed by one who deliberately without permission reads a book which is condemned by name."

#### CONDEMNED BY LAW

Many people mistakenly think that because a book obviously contrary to faith and morals is not listed in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, it is not condemned. Such is not the case. There are many more books on the Index by law than by name, because it would be

2. Hart, Rev. Charles A. "Freedom of the Press and Forbidden Books." *Catholic Action* (February 1944) p. 6-7.

3. Beste, O.S.B. *Introduction in Codicem*, St. John's Abbey Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1944, p. 691-2.

manifestly impossible for the Congregation of the Holy Office to examine every book coming off the presses of the world. So, to care for that need, the Church has laid down legislation which is contained, as mentioned above, in some twenty canons of the Code.

This legislation of the Church is made largely to enforce the natural law, which requires us to do good and to avoid evil. Surely anything that would endanger our priceless gift of faith or cause in us any other spiritual harm, such as the weakening of our morals, is an evil. That heretical, subversive, immoral literature can do untold harm to faith and morals is obvious. So, the Church in full accord with her divine commission to safeguard, in so far as she can, the faith and morals of her children, comes forward and effectively exercises her duty in this regard by supplementing the indefinite natural law with positive laws concerning the publication and reading of books.

These laws or regulations are two-fold; first, laws or regulations that tend to prevent the publication of certain books, called *censorship of books*; and secondly, laws or regulations that prohibit Catholics from reading certain books already published, called *prohibition of books*.

#### CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS

Without previous ecclesiastical approval, even laymen are not allowed to publish: the books of Sacred Scripture, or annotations and commentaries on them; books treating of Sacred Scripture, theology, ethics, or other religious or moral sciences; books or pamphlets of prayers, or devotion, or of religious, moral, ascetic, or mystical doctrine and instruction; and other works of a similar nature.

Furthermore, translations of the Holy Scriptures in the vernacular may not be

printed unless they have been approved by the Holy See, or are published under the supervision of the bishops and provided with annotations taken especially from the Holy Fathers of the Church and learned Catholic writers.

Some of those books must have ecclesiastical approval; that is, they must have the *imprimatur* of the bishop in whose diocese they are published. Other books should have the *imprimatur*. Those books which must have ecclesiastical approval before they may be published are the books of Sacred Scriptures, or annotations or commentaries on the same, and translations of the Scriptures into the vernacular, unless they have been approved by the Holy See; also books or pamphlets recording new apparitions, revelations, prophecies, or miracles or fostering new devotions. Otherwise they are prohibited by law. Other books of a religious nature should have the *imprimatur*, although they are not prohibited by law.

#### PROHIBITION OF BOOKS

The right and duty to prohibit books for a good reason is vested not only in the Supreme Pontiff for the Universal Church, but also in the particular Councils and the local Ordinaries for their particular subjects. An abbot of an independent monastery and the supreme superior of an exempt religious body may also, with their respective Chapters or Councils, forbid books to their subjects for a good reason; this same authority is possessed by other major superiors with their Council in cases where delay would be dangerous, but they are bound to refer the matter as soon as possible to the supreme superior.

Lay Catholic librarians should report such books either to their confessor, to

their pastor, or even to the Chancery office.

#### CONSEQUENCE OF PROHIBITION

Two canons are particularly important in regard to forbidden books. The first, Canon 1398, treats of the consequences of the prohibition of books and reads: "The prohibition has this effect, that the forbidden books may not without due permission be published, read, retained, sold, or translated into another language, or communicated to others in any manner."

The prohibition to read books which are on the Index seems to be clear. What does not seem to be clear is the injunction that books on the Index must not be kept in one's possession. When one realizes that he has a book which is on the Index either by law or by name, he must destroy it or give it up to the proper ecclesiastical authorities.

To retain a forbidden book admits of lightness of matter. As Beste says:

"Generally speaking the retaining of a book for a few days is held as light; but the retaining which lasts for a month or more constitutes grave matter on account of the length of time, unless perhaps for a reasonable cause one is excused, until an occasion presents itself of giving the book to a superior or of asking for the permission required to read it."<sup>4</sup>

Of course librarians, either public or private, are exempt from the prohibition to retain books, since they are rather guardians of books and not owners of them.

#### CLASSES OF FORBIDDEN BOOKS

The next canon, Canon 1399, lists certain classes or categories of books which by the very order of common law are prohibited and, as such, are affected by the preceding canon, just as if they were forbidden by name. That is, they may not be published, read, retained, sold, or

translated into another language, or communicated to others in any manner.

By the law itself are forbidden:

1. editions of the original text or of ancient Catholic versions of the Sacred Scriptures (including those of the Oriental Church), published by any non-Catholics whatsoever; likewise, translations of these texts made or published by non-Catholics;
2. books of any writers, fighting in defense of heresy or schism, or tending in any way to undermine the very foundations of religion;
3. books which avowedly attack religion or good morals;
4. books of any non-Catholic treating professedly of religion, unless it is certain that they contain nothing contrary to the Catholic faith;
5. books of Sacred Scripture, notes and commentaries thereon, and translations which have been published without the permission required by Canon 1385 and Canon 1391; books and pamphlets which give an account of new apparitions, revelations, visions, prophecies, or miracles, or which introduce new devotions (even if it is claimed that the devotions are private) unless the precepts of the Canons regarding their publication have been observed;
6. books which attack or ridicule any of the Catholic dogmas, or which defend errors condemned by the Holy See, or which disparage divine worship, or strive to overthrow ecclesiastical discipline, or which have the avowed aim of defaming the ecclesiastical hierarchy or the clerical or religious states;
7. books which teach or approve of any kind of superstition, fortune-telling, divination, magic, communication

<sup>4</sup> Beste, *Op. cit.*, p. 687.

with spirits, and other things of that kind;

8. books which declare duels, suicide, or divorce as licit; which treat of the masonic and other similar sects, and contend that these are not pernicious, but rather useful to the Church and civil society;
9. books which professedly discuss, describe, or teach impure and obscene topics;
10. editions of liturgical books approved by the Holy See, which have been unlawfully changed in some particulars so that they no longer agree with the authentic and approved editions;
11. books which publish indulgences which are apocryphal, or which have been condemned or recalled by the Holy See;
12. any images whatsoever of Our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, of the angels, or of the saints or other servants of God, which are not in harmony with the spirit and Decrees of the Church.

A few of the expressions in the categories just mentioned need to be explained. For example, the expression, "fighting in defense [of heresy or schism]" in Category 2 means, "defending by bringing forth reasons [for their errors], trying to persuade the reader, etc.; not merely by asserting or telling about [their errors]".<sup>5</sup> The expression in the same category, "tending in any way to undermine the very foundations of religion", means either *seriously* or *by ridicule* to try to undermine the truth of the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, free will, possibility of revelation, and truths of this kind.

Then what is said in Category 5 about books of Sacred Scriptures, notes and

commentaries thereon, etc., should remind us that all such writings in that category must have the *imprimatur*.

Next the combined expressions *professedly* and *discuss, describe or teach impure and obscene topics* need to be made clear.

First of all what is meant by "*professedly*"? "*Professedly*," says Sabetti in his *Moral Theology*, "means not incidentally, but by set purpose".<sup>6</sup> Beste more clearly says: "*Professedly* is to treat of something plainly, copiously, and extraordinarily."<sup>7</sup>

Then what do we mean "*to discuss, describe or teach impure and obscene topics*"? This is a serious question. The answer is furnished by Beste. He says:

"Under this prohibition fall those kinds of writings which suggest bad thoughts to the reader, or excite him to lust and venereal pleasure, or attract him to indulge in sensuality or a certain lascivious mysticism or entice him to perform shameful deeds or teach him how to do them."<sup>8</sup>

Hence it is evident that those books which plainly, copiously, and extraordinarily discuss, describe, or teach impure and obscene topics fall under Category 9 of Canon 1399 and are on the Index of Forbidden Books.

The legislators of the Code of Canon Law have tried to be as specific as possible in stating the law; the recognized authorities on canon law and moral theology have interpreted as clearly as possible just what the law means in regard to those twelve categories of forbidden books. Some books can be detected at once as belonging to one or the other category; as for example, *The Human Life of Jesus*, the latest title by John Erskine. That book is surely on the Index by virtue of Categories 2 and 4. Other books,

6. *Ibid.*, p. 341.

7. Beste, *Op cit.*, p. 688.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 691.

5. Sabetti, Aloysio, S.J. *Compendium Theologiae Moralit.* Cincinnati, F. R. Pustet, 1939, p. 340.

sometimes, are more difficult to judge, especially those that might belong to Category 9; namely, books which professedly discuss, describe, or teach impure and obscene topics. In such cases what is to be done? If one honestly judges that a particular work does not come under the positive law of the Church, he may read it, provided he observes the natural law; for the decision whether or not a certain work be included under one of the preceding classes must necessarily rest on the judgment and conscience of each one, unless in respect to that work there would be a prohibition brought forth by a particular decree.

If one who has a normal conscience (that is, a conscience which is neither lax nor scrupulous) doubts whether or not he may read a certain work, may he disregard the doubt and proceed to read? Not yet.

When "he cannot solve this question for himself, he must consult someone who is experienced in this matter, particularly his pastor or his confessor . . .

"But if after making such inquiry the disapproval of the book is not certain, the reading of it is not regarded as forbidden by a positive order of the canon, as long as the prescription of the natural law of guarding against the dangers of contagion and corruption to oneself is preserved."<sup>9</sup>

Needless to say, scientific works on this subject are not obscene; for example, moral theology, which priests must know, and anatomy, which doctors and nurses must know.

May one read obscene classical works? Formerly he might read them; but now he may not.

"Classical works infected with this stain were permitted under the older law to teachers and students, who by reason of their teaching or their office had to read, and in addition, to learn them. This exception, however, has

now been taken away by the Code. Therefore, now none are allowed to use works of such classical authors unless they are put into editions which have been expurgated with zealous care; but if the law of a public school prescribes unexpurgated editions and if the case is urgent and there is a proportionately grave reason, the prohibition of the positive law ceases; but the natural law must always be observed."<sup>10</sup>

We note that nearly every one of the twelve categories speaks specifically of books. We must keep in mind that by "books" the legislator really means "printed matter". Father Hart observes that what is said about books "means also magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, etc., but does not include manuscripts or mimeographed notes not on general sale. Translations of the book forbidden are included in the prohibition."<sup>11</sup>

The same author continues:

"as regards magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, anthologies and compendia, they must be judged by their general policy rather than by some or several articles. For example, the defunct *Menace* would be condemned because of its general policy."<sup>12</sup>

#### PERMISSION TO READ FORBIDDEN BOOKS

We now come to the question of permission to read forbidden books. Cardinals and bishops, and other ordinaries such as abbots and major superiors of clerical exempt organizations of religious, are not bound by the ecclesiastical prohibition of books, provided they employ the necessary precautions. Those necessary precautions include: first, care that they themselves be on their guard against the danger of the contagion of such books; and secondly, that they take care that the prohibited books be kept from others.

For all other persons, the manner of obtaining permission is stated clearly in Canons 1402 and 1403. Canon 1402 says:

10. *Ibid.*, p. 691.

11. Hart, *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 691.

"In the case of books forbidden by the general law of the Church or by Decree of the Holy See, Ordinaries can give their subjects permission to read only individual books and in urgent cases only."

In commenting on this canon, Beste says:

"Under these cautions and limitations here expressed Ordinaries can use this faculty also in favor of those, who by reason of their office or as teachers must read books treating professedly about obscene topics."<sup>13</sup>

The same canon continues:

"If the Ordinaries have obtained from the Holy See a general faculty to allow their subjects to keep and read forbidden books, they shall grant this permission only with discretion and for a good and reasonable cause."

Doctor Beste observes that Ordinaries by virtue of their faculties may grant, for not more than three years, permission to their subjects to read and retain forbidden books, which they truly need as an aid in their work, except books professedly treating about obscene topics; those who have such permission must guard under grave precept that those forbidden books do not fall into the hands of others. Ordinaries too, may, for the same length of time, grant to young people of both sexes, who must attend public schools, permission to read and retain forbidden books, which, by the regulation of the school or by necessity, they are compelled to have in their hands for the sake of their studies. The students may use those books only as long as they are in that necessity. Students, however, cannot obtain permission to read works treating professedly about obscene topics. Students, too, who obtain permission to read forbidden books must guard under grave precept that the forbidden books do not fall into the hands of others.<sup>14</sup>

13. Beste, *Op. cit.*, p. 692.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 692-3.

If one has a sufficient reason for doing so, one may, according to Canon 1403, ask for the faculty from the Holy See to read all books on the Index. Says Father Beste:

"In order to obtain this faculty the petition humbly sought for must be recommended by the proper ordinary if the petitioner is a cleric or a religious, or by the confessor if the petitioner is a lay person; the purpose why he is petitioning and the position which the petitioner occupies must be indicated, e.g., I am the teacher or the professor of such a subject, the librarian in charge of such a library, the writer of such a work, etc. The faculty for reading condemned books implicitly brings with it the permission of reading pamphlets and newspapers."<sup>15</sup>

Further comment would seem to be unnecessary. Unless a subject has specific permission from the Holy See, he may not read a book which is on the Index either by name or by law. He must first obtain the necessary permission from the proper authorities.

#### CARE OF FORBIDDEN BOOKS

The second section of Canon 1403 contains the clause which has been referred to quite often in this paper. It says: "Moreover, they are bound by grave precept to guard the forbidden books in such a manner that they do not fall into the hands of others." This second section of Canon 1403 is of great importance to librarians because herein is contained the call to their duty in virtue of their work to see to it that forbidden matter does not fall into the hands of their clientele. What should be done with forbidden books? The Reverend Harry C. Koenig, in the *Catholic Library World* for October, 1942, under the title, "Proper Care of Forbidden Books", quotes the interpretation of several canonists on this second section of Canon 1403. All of

15. *Ibid.*, p. 693.

them say substantially the same as Beste, whom he also quotes: "Wherefore, the librarian should keep the forbidden books in a separate room, or at least in a separate case under lock and key." The Feehan Memorial Library at Mundelein Seminary, where Father Koenig is head librarian, has such a separate room, where forbidden books are kept.<sup>16</sup>

The St. Bede Library has some inconspicuous sections in the book stacks, which contain only books on the Index. Those sections are always kept locked. Students have come and gone, year after year, and few have ever suspected why those particular sections in the book stacks had locked doors.

#### SOME PROBLEMS

To keep individual prohibited books locked up in a separate place presents no difficulty, and that individual books on the Index must be segregated and locked up is obvious. But a problem presents itself to the librarian immediately in regard to standard sets, such as the *Library of the World's Best Literature*, edited by Charles Warner, in which there are extracts from the writings of many authors whose works are on the Index; the *Harvard Classics*, in which some volumes contain works which are on the Index; anthologies of plays, in which there will be one or the other play which is condemned because of its salaciousness; and many other sets which are familiar to librarians.

How may a librarian act with a true conscience in regard to such sets? There is a principle in Moral Theology which may safely be followed here: "It is allowed to place a good or indifferent cause from which two effects immediately fol-

low, the one good and the other evil, if there is a proportionately grave reason, and the purpose of the agent is honest."<sup>17</sup>

By using this principle we solve the following problems:

1. The *Library of the World's Best Literature* contains scholarly biographies of authors prominent in literature and also contains critical analyses of their works, analyses which cannot easily be found elsewhere; hence, there is a proportionately grave reason to allow some evil in order to obtain so much good. That set may be left on open shelves where even high school boys have access to it.

2. The *Harvard Classics* presents a different problem. Each volume of the *Harvard Classics* is a separate entity in itself. Each volume contains only *works* of authors, no scholarly criticism of the works; works, too, which can very easily be procured in single book form. Usually each volume contains three works. If all three works in a volume are on the Index, obviously the librarian is to remove that volume. But what is to be done if a volume contains one work that is on the Index and one or two works that are not? In that case, since the good works in such a volume can easily be procured in separate book form, the proportionately grave reason for leaving the one condemned work on the shelves is lacking, and the volume is to be removed and locked up with the forbidden books.

3. An anthology with even one play which evidently is on the Index by law is to be locked up with the forbidden books. The reason is, that good plays in such an anthology can usually be obtained in single editions, or often they can be found in other anthologies in

16. Koenig, Rev. Harry C., "Proper Care of Forbidden Books". *Catholic Library World*, (Oct. 1942), p. 19-20, 25.

17. Sabetti, Aloysio, S.J. *Compendium Theologiae Moralis*. Cincinnati, Pustet, 1939, p. 13.

which there are no forbidden works. Hence, the reason for allowing an anthology containing one bad play to be on shelves accessible to students is not proportionately grave enough; this anthology, therefore, is to be locked up.

4. The same reasoning holds for an anthology of works of classical authors. If such an anthology contains a classical work which is infected with the stain of obscenity in an unexpurgated edition, the anthology is to be locked up.

We must make a note here in regard to such anthologies mentioned. If the library should have a good work or even a number of good works, only in an anthology in which also are contained forbidden books, the librarian may certainly lend such an anthology to a professor, whose duty it becomes to warn his students that some definite works in the anthology are on the Index; and hence, that they must not be read under grave precept. The students may, of course, read the good works. It is one thing for a professor to show his students that certain works they have in their hands cannot be read under pain of mortal sin; it is another thing for the librarian to allow such obscene works to fall into the hands of unknown students and readers.

Students need to be taught that there is an Index of Forbidden Books, that certain classes of books mentioned above are on the Index by law. When, therefore, they have in their hands such an anthology, let them follow their conscience. Let them read the good; but, let them, on their own conscience, abstain from the bad.

#### BORDERLINE LITERATURE

So far, so good. Books which are on the Index by name must not be read. Books which are clearly on the Index by

law must not be read. But what about some literature which is coming off the presses today in volume after volume? Such literature does not seem to be professedly obscene; on the other hand, much of it seems more immoral than some of the love stories which have been placed on the Index by name. The problem is difficult to solve because of the subjective element that enters. One person may read a suggestive book and be not in the least affected; another person may read the same book and suffer serious temptations against purity. In such cases the natural law, "Good must be done, evil must be avoided", is to be observed. If the reader suffers serious temptations against the angelic virtue from such reading, he must desist from the reading under pain of serious sin. The natural law holds at all times, even for those who are exempt from the positive law of the Church. Canon 1405 says: "The permission to read forbidden books exempts nobody from the prohibition of the natural law, which forbids the reading of books which are for the particular reader a proximate occasion of sin."

Doctor Beste, in his commentary on this canon, adds:

"Works which are found at the present time very often exceedingly ruinous especially to younger readers are the innumerable imaginative writings which describe, under the form of fiction, filthy and illicit loves, although generally they cannot be called professedly obscene."<sup>18</sup>

Since then this borderline literature is very often exceedingly ruinous, especially to younger readers, it follows that librarians should not allow such literature to fall into the hands of students, especially the younger ones, with the same care that

18. Beste, *Op. cit.*, p. 693.

they keep from them literature forbidden by the Church either by law or by name.

This writer agrees with Father Koenig that one should not advertise to the general student body that a particular title is on the Index.<sup>19</sup> The practice followed in the St. Bede Library is the same as the practice followed in the Feehan Memorial Library; that is, an asterisk is placed before the call number of all the cards in the card catalog for a book which is on the Index, indicating only to the librarian that that particular book is kept in the section reserved for books on the Index.

The laws concerning forbidden books appeared in 1918. No change has been made in those laws to date. That the Church is ever concerned about the harm coming from corruptive books is evident from the "Instruction of Holy Office on Sensual-Mystic Literature" which she sent out in May, 1927, to Archbishops, Bishops, and Ordinaries throughout the world. The Reverend T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J., LL.B., S.T.D., in his *Canon Law Digest* has a translation of this Instruction, from which we quote a few paragraphs:

"Among the most terrible of the evils which in our age are utterly undermining the moral teaching of Christ, and doing so much harm to the souls redeemed by His precious Blood, a prominent place belongs to that type of literature which exploits sensuality and lust, or even a certain lascivious mysticism. . . .

"Let no one make these excuses: that many of those books have a truly admirable brilliance and elegance of style; that they are remarkable for inculcating a psychology in accord with modern discoveries; that the lascivious bodily pleasures are reprobated in as much as they are represented in their true light as most foul, or are sometimes shown to be connected with qualms of conscience, or in as much as it is shown how often the basest pleasures give way at last to the sorrow of a

sort of repentance. For neither elegance of style nor medical nor philosophic lore—if indeed these things are to be found in that sort of writing—nor the intention of the authors, whatever it may be, can prevent the readers, who owing to the corruption of nature are usually very weak and much inclined to impurity, from being gradually enmeshed in the allurements of those unclean pages, from becoming depraved in mind and heart, and finally from throwing away the reins that curb their passions, falling into all kinds of sins, and at times, grown weary of a life of squalor, even committing suicide. . . .

"In consideration, therefore, of the deluge of literature which is pouring in a rising flood upon practically all nations, this Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, which is intrusted with the guardianship of faith and morals, does by apostolic authority, and in the name of His Holiness, by Divine Providence Pope, Pius XI, command all Ordinaries of places to strive by all means in their power to remedy so great and so urgent an evil. . . .

"Moreover, as everyone knows, the Church has already provided by general law that all books which are tainted with immorality, and which of set purpose or openly attack the integrity of morals, be regarded as forbidden just as if they had actually been placed on the Index of forbidden books. If follows that persons who without due permission read a book that is undoubtedly salacious, even though it is not condemned by name by ecclesiastical authorities, commit a mortal sin. And since in this most important matter false and disastrous opinions are current among the faithful, Ordinaries of places must see to it that especially pastors and their assistants give attention to this matter and give the needed instruction to the people."<sup>20</sup>

It behooves all then, especially librarians, to have a high regard for the Index of Forbidden Books. As part of their work of imparting the love of reading to young and old, they should join with the Holy Father, the Bishops, and the priests in helping to prevent literature detrimental to faith and morals from falling into the hands of unwary readers.

19. Koenig, *Op. cit.* p. 20.

20. Bouscaren, T. Lincoln, S.J. *Canon Law Digest*, vol. 1. Milwaukee, Bruce, c1934. p. 687-91.

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## Forbidden Books in a High School Library

By REVEREND HARRY C. KOENIG

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Truly can it be said that there has been no book in publishing history more misjudged and misrepresented than the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. Even when the title is translated into English as the *Index of Forbidden Books*, it still remains a profound mystery to most Catholics as well as to non-Catholics. Unfortunately Catholics have been heard to assert that it is impossible to understand this book and the legislation which it proposes. Not only is this accusation false but Catholics who are librarians have a serious obligation to learn the general legislation of the Church regarding forbidden books.

The latest edition of the *Index to Forbidden Books* available in the United States was published in Rome in 1938 and was sold at the nominal price of fifty cents. It was placed on public sale and anyone could buy as many copies as were desired. Inspecting this edition we see that it is divided into two parts: the first part, outlining the general legislation, occupies twenty-eight pages; the second part, giving an alphabetical list of condemned books, fills 508 pages. Only one possible difficulty can be urged against the *Index* and this is the fact that the general legislation is given in Latin. But by no means is this an insuperable obstacle seeing that English translations and

explanations<sup>1</sup> of this legislation are readily purchased.

To be thoroughly acquainted with the *Index*, one ought to know something about the history of this legislation and about the philosophy upon which it is grounded. But because this paper is restricted to the problems which the *Index* presents to the high school librarian, we shall presuppose that the broader issues can be learned elsewhere. Here we shall make an effort to be practical.

The first practical step which every Catholic high school librarian ought to take is to buy a copy of the *Index*. Even though you cannot read Latin and most of your students do not have the ability to plow through the Latin legislation, it is a good practice to have a copy on hand so that your patrons can at least see and touch this strange volume. Even paging through the *Index* will dispel much of the mystery in which it is now enshrouded. In addition, anyone can read the alphabetical list of condemned titles and thereby convince himself that the vast majority of them are in foreign languages and that the few English titles do not offer any special attraction to high school scholars. Among the English titles are Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the*

1. Consult for example "The Roman Index of Forbidden Books Briefly Explained", by Francis S. Betten, S.J. (Chicago, Loyola University Press. 1925.)

*Roman Empire*, Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, Roscoe's *Life and Pontificate of Leo X*, Robertson's *History of the Emperor Charles V*, and Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. All of these are old books which even in the secular field have been superseded by more modern studies on the same subjects. Hence, there is no reason why Catholic high school students should be interested in these volumes.

Similarly there are many condemned authors whose works have been translated into English, such as Dumas, Balzac, Anatole France, Bergson, Kant, Zola, George Sand, Renan, Victor Hugo, Rousseau and Voltaire. In the Fourth Edition of the *High School Catalog* only one title from these authors was included and that was Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. From this one example we can conclude that even secular librarians are not in the habit of recommending to high school students books that are listed by name in the *Index*. This observation applies equally well to the titles that are being condemned each year by the Holy Office and which will be added to the *Index* as new editions appear. These titles are all learned works in foreign languages and our high school students would be frightened by the sight of them. Imagine suggesting to some high school girl that she read Ernesto Buonaiuti's *Storia del Cristianesimo*, which is the latest book to be officially forbidden!

In the Introduction to the *Catholic Supplement of the Standard Catalog for High School Libraries* (1942), the editors have written: "As a guide to librarians . . . an examination was made of some of the titles in the Standard Catalog which might be contrary to faith and morals. Seventy-five of the books in the 4th edition of 1942 have been marked

'Not approved by Executive Committee of the C.H.S.C.' The rejected titles are mainly in philosophy, religion, evolution, eugenics, literary collections and history, many of them forbidden by the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. Let it be pointed out that the Committee does not set itself up as a super-Index and librarians should exercise the criteria of book selection in all cases."

To my knowledge only one of these seventy-five titles has been forbidden by name in the *Index* and that is Hugo's *Les Misérables*. The other books condemned by the *Index*, to which the editors refer, are those which are prohibited by the general principles. That certain general principles are necessary for evaluating books contrary to faith and morals is evident from the fact that there are about fifty thousand titles published in several hundred languages each year. Obviously the Holy Office cannot review all these books; but it can and does formulate definite principles to guide Catholics in making their own decisions. You as a high school librarian are responsible for applying these principles to the selection of books in your collection. And it is well to remind yourself that books forbidden by these general principles are just as seriously and completely condemned as are those listed by name in the *Index*.

Following the mind of the Church, you will find it necessary to prohibit your patrons from reading the following classes of books:

1) *All books which oppose religion and morality.* This classification includes books on philosophy, sociology, eugenics and evolution if they are opposed to Catholic teaching. For practical purposes we may say that all books by non-Catholics on these subjects are suspect; and, unless you can satisfy your conscience

that a particular book does not conflict with Catholic doctrine, you cannot place it upon your shelves. That the *High School Catalog* lists Will Durant's *Story of Philosophy* is somewhat surprising because philosophy is usually a college subject; but that the Catholic Committee did not annotate this title, to me at least, is really astonishing. Durant is well known as an apostate Catholic who, according to his own admission, read himself out of the Church by studying false philosophical books as a seminarian. Christ has warned us that "when one blind man leads another, they will fall into the ditch together".<sup>2</sup> The high school student who learns his philosophy from Durant will soon find himself in the same ditch with this apostate.

2) *Books which oppose the Catholic Church or articles of Catholic belief such as the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the infallibility of the Pope, etc.* While there are some non-Catholic clergymen who bitterly hate the Church and write professedly against her doctrines, these diatribes are easy to recognize and are usually of little literary merit. But far more subtle and insidious are historical works which pretend to be learned and critical but give a jaundiced and prejudiced view of the Church. Such, for example, are H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*, and G. G. Coulton's *Medieval Panorama*, and H. W. Van Loon's *Van Loon's Lives*—all to be found in the *High School Catalog*.

3) *All editions of the Bible which do not bear the approbation of Catholic authorities.* This prohibition also applies to commentaries upon the Scripture unless it is certain that they contain nothing contrary to Catholic teaching. Only recently in America Father Gardiner noted

that Mary Ellen Chase's popular book—*The Bible and the Common Reader*—is certainly condemned by virtue of this general principle. Because there are many excellent Catholic English translations of Holy Writ, there is no excuse for placing non-approved versions or commentaries upon our shelves.

4) *All books by non-Catholics on religion unless they are evidently in harmony with the Catholic faith.* Non-Catholics who write on religion, whether it be the doctrinal, moral, devotional or liturgical aspect, are naturally inclined to favor the heretical tendencies in their own sects. If this were not true, then they would become Catholics. Therefore, these books are all suspect until the contrary is proved. There are, however, a few exceptions, and as examples I might mention *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis, an Anglican, and *The Song of Bernadette* by Franz Werfel, a Jew. Catholics who are regular patrons of the *High School Catalog* will not be worried too much by this class of book because comparatively few religious works are recommended. This fact illustrates how deeply secularistic education has influenced even our library holdings. But we who realize that the education of the soul is far more important than physics or sociology must provide a sufficient number of attractive Catholic religious books for our students.

5) *Books attacking sound morals by advocating birth control, suicide, mercy killing, divorce, etc.* It is in this respect that many new sociological books offend. But we also find a considerable number of modern novels that are cleverly written to defend divorce, mercy killing or some other contemporary vice. It is true that most of these sophisticated novels

(Continued on page 125)

2. Matthew XV, 14 (Knox translation).

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# The Library of the Popes

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## INTRODUCTION

The Vatican Library at Rome, center of all Christendom, is unique in that it was founded as a manuscript library and is maintained as such to this very day. It is first among the libraries of the world for the importance and number of its collection of MSS. The printed books it has acquired have the essential purpose of facilitating and promoting the study of the MSS.

The history of the papal library is the history of the Church itself. Down the long line of its illustrious Popes, however, there stand out the four great luminaries of the library world — Nicholas V, the great humanist Pope; Sixtus IV, who gave the Vatican a permanent abode by erecting its glorious halls; Leo XIII, who opened the treasures of the Vatican Library to world scholars; and Pius XI, the Librarian-Pope, who was responsible for the complete modernization of such an ancient institution, the heritage of all peoples.

## ORIGINS

We may trace the origins of the papal library in the primitive history of the Church. Together with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which was its first book, were to be found in the papal Scrinium the works of Tertullian, Origen, the Acts of the martyrs, liturgical codices, and chirographs of the Popes. Unfortunately,

in the year 303, the flames kindled by Diocletian destroyed this priceless treasure of sacred memories.

After the peace of Constantine the Popes began to build up an Apostolic Library, which was housed in turn at S. Lorenzo in Damaso, in the Lateran Palace, at Avignon, and ultimately in the Apostolic Palace on Vatican Hill, its present habitat.

The history of the library, however, can be made out from actual library records only with the accession to the papal throne of Boniface VIII, who in 1295, ordered to be made the first catalog of books which has come down to us. From that date, through well-nigh seven centuries, an almost unintermittent series of catalogs has been published. At that time the library registered almost 500 volumes.

## NICHOLAS V

It was Nicholas V (1447-1455) who brought the papal library to the Apostolic Palace and set out to build up its collection by buying up or having copied out every Greek and Latin codex he could find. Like the famous king of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, this papal lover of books searched through every monastery of Italy and Germany for MSS, of every type, which the monks had to copy out for a penance or for love of the arts and sciences — books on grammar, rhetoric,

poetry, history, architecture, music, military science, medicine, theology, canon and civil law, etc.

One may without doubt call this great Pope the founder of the Vatican Library. "It was his greatest joy," says Voigt, "to walk about his library, arranging the books and glancing through their pages, admiring the handsome bindings and taking pleasure in contemplating his own arms stamped on those that had been dedicated to him, and dwelling in thought on the gratitude that future generations of scholars would entertain toward their benefactor. Thus he is to be seen depicted in one of the halls of the Vatican Library, employed in setting his books." When he died, the collection of choice MSS. reached a number of 1200.

#### SIXTUS IV

Since there was no official depository for these MSS. it remained for Sixtus IV (1471-1484) to assign four large halls to house the collection and increase the book stock of the library, now neglected for some years. Until then the library had suffered considerably and many volumes were missing. The energetic Pope proceeded to remedy the situation. He issued a special Bull, and after stating that "certain ecclesiastical and secular persons, having no fear of God before their eyes, have taken sundry volumes in theology and other faculties from the library, which volumes they still presume rashly and maliciously to hide and secretly to detain", warned such persons to return the said books within forty days under penalty of excommunication *ipso facto*. The effect of the decree has not been recorded.

The Pope decided to house the library in the Vatican Palace, from which it later took its name of the *Bibliotheca Vaticana*.

Over 2,500 Greek and Latin MSS. were bought during his reign. As in the Laurentian Library at Florence, the MSS. were chained to long tables. They were, however, occasionally loaned to prominent persons, who were obliged to deposit a suitable pledge as security.

Sixtus IV undertook the construction of the library in the very first year of his pontificate. It was built underneath the Stanze of Nicholas V. By 1475 the walls were ready for decoration, and in it was painted the fresco representing Bartolomeo Platina, the Prefect of the Library, at the feet of Sixtus IV. The library was divided into four parts, the Greek, the Latin, the Archives or Secret, and the Papal or private library of the Pope. Platina arranged and cataloged all the books, which by 1,484 grew to about 3,700 volumes.

Together with his three assistants, Platina lived in the rooms adjoining the library. Among the duties of the Prefect were not only the administration and housekeeping, but the purchase of MSS., the orders for binding and illumination, the buying of supplies as parchment, colored inks, etc. In the library records interesting details may be found, such as the order for candles and wood "*ad usum bibliothecae*", brooms for the floors, fox-tails for dusting the books, and the purchase of a portable stove "*pro usu bibliothecae propter frigiditatem loci*".

#### LEO X

Leo X (1513-1521) showed great zeal in collecting precious books and MSS., increasing the Vatican Library to 4,070 volumes. This made it the richest MS. collection in the world. In the search for MSS., the Pope engaged the services of an expert book hunter, Fausto Sabeo, who was instructed to penetrate all cloisters

and abbeys, every parish and private library. The latter tramped through Italy, France, Germany, and Greece, suffering untold dangers and fatigue, with the sole thought of bringing back and spreading out his treasures, at the feet of the Pope. At the sight of a MS. all his troubles would vanish in thin air.

Leo X considered it his special mission to promote the fine arts and belles-lettres, when he wrote that "from our earliest youth we have been thoroughly convinced that, next to the knowledge and true worship of the Creator, nothing is better or more useful for mankind than such studies, which are not only an adornment and a standard of human life, but are also of service in every circumstance. In misfortune they console us, in prosperity they confer joy and honor, and without them man would be robbed of all social grace and culture. The security and extension of these studies seem to demand two conditions: on the one hand, they require a sufficient number of learned and scholarly men, and on the other, an unlimited supply of first-rate books . . . As regards the acquisition of books, we give God thanks that in the present instance we have a further opportunity of rendering useful service to our fellow men."

#### SIXTUS V

During the sack of Rome in 1527 many precious volumes of the Vatican Library were destroyed or pilfered away. If not for this fact, the library might have had a complete set of early printed books or incunabula. Sixtus V (1585-1590) decided to transfer the library in 1588 from the rooms of Sixtus IV to new and larger quarters. He ordered Domenico Fontana, his architect, to cut in two the beautiful Courtyard of the Belvedere and erect a

new building 100 feet high. The entire upper floor, the so-called Sistine Library, was a magnificent hall, 184 feet long and 57 feet wide, richly ornamented with frescoes of ecumenical councils and ancient libraries.

In the course of the following centuries the library space was extended with the growth of new accessions, so that the adjacent rooms and galleries were occupied one after another in two giant wings at right angles to the Sistine hall. At the beginning of the 17th century the cataloging of books was inaugurated again, and a system of classification was determined. The book catalogs then made are still in use, and the classification under six successive librarians was handed down to this very day. Baronius was one of that famous group of librarians that thought out the system of classification.

#### LEO XIII

Up to the time of Leo XIII (1878-1903), readers scarcely ever came to the library, for they had no access to the necessary catalogs and indexes, and accommodations for them were very poor. The great pontiff realized how important it was to throw open to world scholars the literary and historical treasures of the Vatican. Larger space was prepared for a reading room, and better light was provided by opening additional windows in the ancient thick walls.

Pope Leo ordered the printing of the Vatican catalogs and founded a reference room of printed books, which were to serve the reader in consulting the MSS. and archives more profitably. The new reference room, called the Bibliotheca Leonina, was placed under the Sistine Library in the former Armory, which served to store away the muskets of the pontifical soldiers.

The Vatican Library now awoke from a deep slumber. Very soon, the compilation of complete catalogs for the MSS. began, and likewise the publication of facsimiles of famous MSS., and the edition of important dissertations in the series of *Studi e Testi*. At the bottom of all these enterprises was the indefatigable Jesuit librarian, Franz Ehrle, later made Cardinal.

#### PIUS X

Pius X (1903-1914) assigned more space to the expanding library by transferring the Vatican printing office to a new site and placing a reading room on the ground floor. An elevator was installed to connect the ms. rooms immediately overhead with the new reading room.

On October 18, 1910, Pius X wrote to Cardinal Ferrari, archbishop of Milan, asking him to send Monsignor Achille Ratti, Prefect of the Ambrosian Library, to Rome to succeed Father Ehrle as Prefect of the Vatican Library. Ratti entered in full capacity on September 1, 1914, and was librarian for four years, when he was sent as Apostolic Visitor to Poland. In his brief stay in the Vatican Library, five volumes of *Studi e Testi* were published together with three volumes of the book catalogs. The card catalog of printed volumes was also initiated.

#### PIUS XI

But with the election of Ratti as Pope Pius XI (1922-1939), a golden era was ushered in for the venerable library of the Popes. This great pontiff decided to modernize it. Fortunately, about this time, the interest of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was directed toward the Vatican Library project through the instrumentality of Duke Gelasio Caetani, former Italian ambassador

to the United States, and Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University.

The Pope graciously accepted the Endowment's offer to finance the reorganization of the cataloging and classification systems of "the most famous and valuable collections of MSS. and books in existence", and sent Monsignor Eugene Tisserant, now a Cardinal, to visit the leading libraries in America. The latter attended a conference of the American Library Association at Toronto and made contacts with various American library specialists in cataloging and classification. On returning to Rome he reported to the Holy Father, and definite plans were established for the reorganization of the library.

Arrangements were made to send four members of the Vatican library staff to the United States, in the summer of 1927, to study American methods. With the support of the Carnegie Endowment, Monsignor Enrico Benedetti and Monsignor Carmelo Scalia spent six months working in the Library of Congress, and Dr. Igino Giordani and Dr. Gerardo Bruni attended courses of Library Science at Columbia University and the University of Michigan. In the spring months of 1928, four leading American librarians went to the Vatican to begin the work of reorganization together with other experts. The group consisted of Dr. William W. Bishop, librarian of the University of Michigan, the late Charles Martel, chief cataloger of the Library of Congress, James C. M. Hanson, librarian of the University of Chicago, and William M. Randall, of Kennedy School of Missions Library in Hartford.

The Library of Congress furnished a complete set of its printed catalog cards

and established a depository catalog at the Vatican. The presence of American cards in the Vatican Library later justified Dr. Bishop's prediction when he wrote: "I regard this agreement on cataloging principles as an international undertaking of great importance, which will advance the practice of international cataloging at least fifty years."

Among the projects introduced at this time were the compilation, on typewritten cards, of a main author index of the MSS. following a systematic examination of the various book-catalogs in the library, of a general alphabetic catalog for the incunabula, and of a dictionary catalog for the printed books, modeled on the type in America and based on the rules contained in a manual entitled, *Norme per il catalogo degli stampati*.

Besides the project of recataloging, attention was given to the construction of new quarters for housing all the printed books. This was done by Pius XI between 1927 and 1931. The *Nuova Biblioteca* occupies the ground floor and first floor of the ancient Bramante gallery, built by Julius II, and until then used for the stables and the mosaic factory respectively.

Since the Pope decided to install modern bookstacks in the new library, he made bids with American, British, French, and Italian firms, and as a result, chose to give the contract for new metal stacks to Snead and Company of Jersey City, who specialize in American library equipment. About fourteen miles of steel shelving were required to fill the two floors of the building, each with three decks of tiers. The most modern devices for lighting, ventilation, and facilities in service were introduced into the oldest library of Europe, now completely modernized.

The name of Pius XI will certainly go down in history not only for the addition of 100,000 volumes and 1,000 MSS. to the Vatican Library, but also for the new bookstacks, new catalogs, and the new halls, planned to serve the scholars of all the world.

#### COLLECTIONS

At the present time the Vatican collection amounts to some 60,000 MSS., 9,000 incunabula, and 500,000 printed volumes. The collection of incunabula is one of the largest and most important ones in the world. And for the number and type of its MSS. the Vatican Library is without a peer. These are mostly in Latin, but many are in Greek, Arabic, Coptic, Slavic, etc.

Among the precious MSS. there is Cicero's *De Republica*, a palimpsest, the oldest Latin MS. in existence. Another is the *Virgil of the Vatican*, dating from the fourth century. Famous also are a MS. of Dante's *Inferno* in Boccaccio's handwriting; autographs of Petrarch, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and Michelangelo; Henry VIII's pamphlet, *In defense of the Sacraments*, against Luther, which obtained for him the title of "Defender of the Faith". The greatest treasure of the Vatican, however, is the *Codex Vaticanus*, the most ancient MS. of the Greek Bible in existence, dating from the fourth century.

Together with these venerable documents of years gone by, one is pleasantly surprised to find collections of volumes from the Smithsonian Institute, the American Historical Society, the Catholic University of America, and other modern universities. All this goes to show that culture transcends space and time and that the Vatican Library contributes to that catholicity of human interests which breaks all bonds of race and prejudice.

## ACTIVITIES

During the last few decades new life blood has been infused into the library by the development of several activities. One of these is the founding of a library school at the Vatican to help students in charge of ecclesiastical or parochial libraries. The school aims to be more practical than theoretical and includes all the important factors necessary to form a librarian. Two courses have been given by Professors Igino Giordani and Nello Vian, American trained librarians of the Vatican, and comprise that of "Cataloging" and "Organization and services of the library". Pope Pius XI was very pleased with the inauguration of this school and its initial success, and, in an audience granted to the body of students in 1935, states that it is much better to govern books (the librarian's task) than to govern men.

Toward the end of the last century a MS. hospital to restore corroded, faded, or almost ruined pages of old books and MSS. was started. The experts of this famous laboratory, with the help of modern chemistry, bring back to life ancient documents and make them readable once more. At one time the American millionaire, John P. Morgan, sent fifty-six Coptic MSS., unearthed in Egypt, to this library clinic, and after ten years of treatment they were released completely reinvigorated.

The library's publications are well-known and of many years standing. They include catalogs of the Vatican MSS., a series of *Studi e Testi* or collections of monographs, critical texts, dissertations, etc., and photographic reproductions of restored MSS.

## STAFF

The personnel of the Vatican Library consists of a Cardinal Librarian, who ex-

ercises supreme supervision over the library and approves all important regulations; a Prefect of the library, who carries the burden of administration; a Vice-Prefect; a body of Scrittori, who serve as interpreters of the MSS. by investigating, arranging, and describing them, and by preparing catalogs of them for printing; a staff of Attendants, who perform the technical work of binding, repairing, and preserving the MSS.

The first Cardinal Librarian was Marcello Cervini, appointed in 1548. Other celebrated ones were Cardinals Mai and Mezzofanti; the present one is Cardinal Giovanni Mercati. Father Franz Ehrle, the German Jesuit, served as Prefect from 1895 to 1914 and merited the praise of scholars throughout the world. Another illustrious Prefect was Monsignor Achille Ratti, the late Pius XI, the Librarian-Pope.

## CONCLUSION

Under every aspect, the ancient library of the Popes has fast become one of the most up-to-date libraries of the 20th century. In a report of Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler to the Carnegie Endowment attention is called to the inexhaustible riches of the Vatican library and the service rendered by the Endowment to international scholarship. Scholars throughout the world have bestowed the highest praise upon the Vatican authorities for their cooperation with such organizations as the American Library Association and the Library of Congress.

An incredible treasury of MSS., incunabula, documents, and prints have been accumulating in the Vatican since the foundation of the Church, and when made completely available according to recognized library norms, will invite the attention of critics and historians. The

(Continued on page 125)

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## Book Party for Our Lady

By REVEREND CLEMENT J. LAMBERT, S.M.

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These last two years of my residence in Dayton, I have noted that Our Lady has been making quite a few appearances about town. And these appearances, I have further noted, have often occurred in hitherto unexpected places.

Many a time, as I passed down the streets of the business district, she has greeted me from show windows, jewelry stores, curio and souvenir shops, the five-and-ten chain stores. A year ago at Christmas time I rejoiced to see that she had made the billboards. This past fall a chaste-white modern statue of the Virgin, framed by a few chaste-white gladioli—all set in a porcelain, chaste-white leaf-shaped dish—won a blue ribbon in the flower show at the Dayton county fair. At this same fair she held forth at a booth of her world famous Legion of Mary.

In the spring of 1944, Our Lady was a very conspicuous figure in the national exhibit of "Religious Art of Today", given at the Dayton Art Institute. About the same time she established a permanent throne in the Air City when the National Marian Library was founded at the University of Dayton. And after Werfel's novel had made her a best-seller in the local bookshops, she appeared on the silver screen at the RKO Colonial for two weeks, and later reappeared "at popular prices" for a run of another week.

Recently, only a few months ago, her latest appearance occurred. Where? On the first floor of Dayton's largest department store. This is the way it happened.

An autograph party was scheduled to take place in Rike's department store. The three principals were: Miss Rebecca Wise, head of the bookshop; Frank Bruce, publisher; and Don Sharkey, local author. In sponsoring and promoting the autograph party, each of these three had a different main motive. Miss Wise wanted to promote a local author. Frank Bruce saw in the autograph party a fine chance for "missionary work for Catholic bookselling in Dayton". Don Sharkey longed to have as many people as possible hearken to the story of Our Lady of Lourdes as told in his new book, *After Bernadette*. With these and other powerful motives driving them on, the three principals bent every effort to make the autograph party a success.

Frank Bruce had his advertising manager, Miss Elizabeth Ewens, make up a very attractive advertisement to be used in the Dayton papers. This advertisement appeared for two evenings immediately preceding the party. In addition, Miss Ewens sent 1500 printed announcements to Miss Wise and to Mr. Sharkey for distribution.

Miss Wise saw to it that a large, artistically designed poster was placed in

Rike's Main Street show window. She also prepared a radio announcement for a local station, which was broadcast twice a day during the three days preceding the party. And in order to make direct personal contacts, she decided to enclose in the book packages being mailed from Rike's some of the announcement cards received from Miss Ewens. The remainder of the announcement cards were sent to people whose names were on a list secured from the Catholic Charities Office. Altogether, seven hundred and fifty announcements were distributed.

Mr. Sharkey, ably assisted by his wife, left no stone unturned to obtain a local best-seller triumph for *Our Lady of Lourdes*. After a satisfactory mailing list had been completed, more than seven hundred announcements were sent to persons who would most likely be interested in the book. Through faculty members of their acquaintance they contacted the Catholic boys' high school, the Catholic girls' high school, and the University of Dayton, of which Mr. Sharkey is an alumnus. The students at each of these schools, by direct and poster appeal, were urged to attend the party.

On Wednesday, September twenty-sixth, the sky was dark and overcast. Mr. Sharkey was anxious. How many people, he wondered, would feel like making their way to Rike's in a downpour? "In the morning," he told us, "I went to Mass and Communion. I begged the Blessed Virgin to send at least a few people to the store. I did not fail to recall that the book was dedicated to her."

Our Lady heard his prayer. "As my wife and I were driving downtown to the autograph party," he informed me, "the sun peeped out from behind the clouds and the weather was nice for the rest of

the afternoon. When evening came, the rain poured down. The only nice weather we had all day was while the party was in progress. The Blessed Virgin must have been smiling upon us."

Mr. Sharkey had asked Our Lady to send "at least a few people to the store". She sent a big crowd. Or rather, she graciously awaited and drew unto herself a big crowd; for one could sense in that autograph party, held in the bookshop of the city's largest department store, the atmosphere and power of a Marian shrine. Our Lady's blessing hovered over all: the "Best Wishes" of the autographed inscription, carefully written into each "first edition" copy, were but her humble servant's echo of the higher benediction bestowed by Our Lady of Lourdes on those who had come to learn more about her. Other books in the shop—hundreds, thousands of them—which usually clamored for recognition in their loud and multi-colored jackets, were hardly noticed while Our Lady's book, in blue and white cover, held gracious sway.

As we might expect, it was a pleasant and sociable group who attended the party. Everybody enjoyed everybody else. The only one to feel the *onus* of labor was Mr. Sharkey, who steadily autographed books for two and a half hours. A guest doctor jocosely offered to rub his arm. As to ages and classes, the crowd was mixed: teen-agers from the Catholic high schools and the University of Dayton, business men, professional men and women, Catholic housewives, personal friends of the author.

Among the individuals who appeared at the party, perhaps the most surprising was a Protestant minister from one of the downtown churches. Instructing a wedding couple to await his return, he hied

himself off to get a copy of Mr. Sharkey's *White Smoke Over the Vatican*, many copies of which were also autographed. "As it is very unlikely that you will ever set yourself to writing a book on Calvin," he smilingly told the author, "I thought it a good idea to purchase a book on someone you did think important enough to write about—the Pope and his kingdom, Vatican City."

I put in my promised appearance when the party was well under way—half over, in fact. As I hurried down the aisle and approached the bookshop, Miss Wise answered the question she could see forming on my lips. "Yes, Father," she enthusiastically exclaimed, "you may write it up. It is a wonderful success." I had asked her permission the previous Saturday to write up the story of the party, if it proved to be a success. It was not only a success, I discovered, it was a triumph. It was a success for the local author, for Miss Wise of Rike's and for the Bruce Publishing Company. And it was a signal triumph for Our Lady.

The party was, in the first place, a success for the local author. Had he written a thrilling novel or a tale with a Dayton setting, one would not have been surprised at a large sale of copies. The point is that Mr. Sharkey had made a hit with a story of modern Lourdes, a gripping story, yes, but only for those who can move on the elevated plane of the spiritual. As a troubadour of Our Lady of faraway Lourdes, the "hometown boy" had made good and would charm all those who took along with them in book form the beautiful song he had chosen to sing.

The party was likewise a success for Rike's and Miss Wise. Gifted with remarkable executive qualities, the latter

is definite and decisive about what she wants, very straightforward in expressing her ideas, and determined to achieve whatever goal she sets for herself. She has gone on record as saying that this was the best autograph party she has staged in Dayton. All but fifty of the two hundred copies of *After Bernadette* that she had stocked were sold in less than two and a half hours; this number was exhausted the next day. In addition, many copies of *White Smoke Over the Vatican* were also sold and autographed. Incidentally, from remarks trickling her way, Miss Wise learned that the "pleasant and refined" crowd at the party had edified the onlookers, who included her co-workers in the bookshop (most of them, like Miss Wise, non-Catholics), as well as workers and shoppers in other departments on Rike's first floor. Proud hostess! The party was also a success for the Bruce Publishing Company. The publisher had a particular interest in Mr. Sharkey's latest book. Right Reverend Monsignor Francis X. Shea, secretary to Archbishop Spellman, and Mr. Gene Murphy, sales manager for Bruce, had together enjoyed the film version of *The Song of Bernadette* on its opening night in New York City. On their way home, Monsignor Shea wondered if people realized the number of miracles that have been performed at Lourdes since the time of Bernadette, continuing even in the present day. It was this casual remark made by Monsignor Shea that grew and developed into the idea for a book. It was decided to write a book, up-to-date and well illustrated, a sort of storied travelogue. Who would be better fitted for the job than Mr. Don Sharkey, whose travelogue about Vatican City, *White Smoke Over the Vatican*, had not long

(Continued on page 126)

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## News and Notes

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### C.L.A. CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Catholic Library Association will be resumed this year as war-time restrictions have been relaxed. At a meeting of the Executive Council which was held in Chicago, December 28th at the Drake Hotel, it was decided to plan a convention meeting of the C.L.A. members at St. Louis, April 23-25.

At the Executive Council meeting immediate problems and future plans for broadening the services of the Association were discussed. A Catholic Supplement to the *Children's Catalog*, compiled along the same lines as the *Catholic Supplement to the Standard Catalog for High School Libraries* was proposed. Mr. Ralph Ulveling, President of the American Library Association, and Mr. Carl Milam, Executive Secretary, were guests of the Council at a luncheon meeting. The advantages of C.L.A. affiliation with A.L.A. were discussed.

Miss Dorothy E. Lynn, submitted her resignation as Secretary-Treasurer and Editor of the *Catholic Library World*, effective July 1, 1946. The Council moved to open nominations and applications for the position to the general membership (see inside back cover). In recognition of their contribution to the Catholic Library Association, Mr. Eugene P. Willging, librarian at the University of Scranton, and Miss Lynn were voted life members of the Association. Mr. Willging served as Secretary-Treasurer and Editor

1939-1942. Miss Lynn assumed office upon Mr. Willging's resignation.

The so-called "15 for 1" scheme of selling subscription books was condemned by Council members.

Present at the meeting were: President, Richard J. Hurley, University of Nebraska; Vice-President, Brother Aurelian Thomas, F.S.C., Manhattan College; Secretary-Treasurer, Dorothy E. Lynn, University of Scranton; Reverend James J. Kortendick, S.S., Catholic University of America; Reverend Colman Farrell, St. Benedict's College; Sister Marie Cecilia, C.S.J., College of St. Catherine; Sister M. Norberta, I.H.M., Marywood College; Dr. William FitzGerald, St. Louis University.

### WASHINGTON UNIT BOOK WEEK ACTIVITY

At the first Fall meeting of the Washington-Maryland-Virginia Unit held at Immaculata Junior College, the Catholic Book Week chairman, Sister Joan Marie, submitted the following report of her committee:

Sister Mary David, Assistant Librarian, College of Notre Dame of Maryland, chairman of the Baltimore area, conducted an Oratorical Contest for the students of the Catholic high schools and colleges in the city of Baltimore. Eight high schools and three colleges participated. The college students prepared fifteen minute talks on "Catholic Publishers: Promoters of Peace". The topic for the high schools was "My Favorite

Catholic Novel". Each school sent one contestant to the final eliminations. College awards went to Mr. Thomas Lalley, a junior at Loyola College, and to Miss Jane Maynes, College of Notre Dame of Maryland; high school awards, to Miss Patricia Taylor of Seton High School, and Miss Catherine Taylor of the Institute of Notre Dame.

Radio publicity was arranged through Reverend William Kailer Dunn, Director of the Catholic Social Clubs of Baltimore. Programs included a broadcast by the winners of the contests; a fifteen-minute broadcast on Father Tabb by Dr. Francis E. Litz of Catholic University; a fifteen-minute program of readings from modern Catholic poetry, by Miss Aileen Mize, director of Speech and Drama at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland.

Publicity committees carried the observance of Catholic Book Week to the public library, the local press and the leading department stores.

#### ABBEY LIBRARY RECEIVES RARE COLLECTION

An interesting and valuable collection of historical documents on parchment and on paper has recently come into the possession of the Abbey Library at St. Benedict's College, Atchison, Kansas. The collection, a gift of the Reverend R. F. Paquette of Newport, Michigan, was brought together by the donor during a period of several years when he was resident in Rome as an officer in one of its many colleges.

The collection consists of about 140 pieces: nineteen of them parchment manuscripts, mostly papal bulls, rescripts, and letters dating from about 1550 to 1850, and a few from the duchy of Venice dated about 1790. Most of them are in Latin, but a number are in Italian.

The documents on paper are mostly manuscripts; a few, including ten passports (Papal States, Italy, Sardinia), a number of hunting licenses, permits to sell liquor, to bear arms, etc., are filled-in forms. All of these have dates between 1840 and 1860.

Five original letters, apparently so far unpublished, dealing with the Napoleonic wars and the reigns of Pius VI and Pius VII, are included in the collection. The only pieces in English are two letters of introduction, both introducing Augustine and Louis Chiaveri, sons of the Marquis Torlonia (Rome) who were "to spend a year or two in England both for their amusement and improvement". One of them is dated at Leghorn, 26 February 1803 and is addressed to Samuel Farell, Grove Hill, Camberwell, Eng., by his "faithful friend and hble. servant, L. S. Martin". The other, dated at Birmingham, Sept. 19th, 1804, was written by Samuel Galton to Sir William Watson at Bath. This latter is of interest because in it Mr. Galton says, "they (Augustine and Louis Chiaveri) were introduced to me by my friend Mr. Corrie of Liverpool to whom they were introduced by Sir Francis Baring". Sir Francis Baring, it will be remembered, was the founder of the famous London banking firm of Baring Brothers and he was the ancestor of the author, Maurice Baring.

#### NEW WORLDS TO LIVE

Pro Parvulis Book Club announces, from its headquarters in the Empire State Building, that the Reverend Francis A. Mullin, Head of the Graduate School of Library Science at the Catholic University of America, and Director of the Library at the University, has written the foreword to *New Worlds to Live*, which

will be published this month. This is the third edition of the catalog, enlarged, completely reset, redesigned, reedited, and completely indexed. It contains over one thousand titles, graded, selected, annotated and recommended for the Catholic child. Advance orders necessitate a large printing. Publication has hitherto been delayed because of paper shortage.

#### BROTHERHOOD WEEK

The National Conference of Christians and Jews announces the thirteenth annual observance of national Brotherhood Week which will be held February 17-24, 1946. The theme is: "In Peace as in War—Teamwork". Program aids for use in schools and colleges may be secured by writing to the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York 18, New York. Materials are adapted to age levels in the schools. Plays, comics, posters, book lists and other types of literature are available.

#### RELIGIOUS BOOK WEEK

The dates for Religious Book Week, observed annually under the auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, are May 5-12, 1946. The Steering Committee, on which are representatives of the Religious Publishers Group, the American Library Association, the New York Public Library, the Children's Book Council, and the various library publications met recently to draw up specifications for the selection of books that will be featured during that week. These specifications provide that thirty books for adults and five for children, published since January 1, 1944 and still in print, will be selected in each of four groups—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Good-will. These are to be not books of prayer or theology, but books with a spiritual

background in the fields of history, fiction, poetry, biography, etc., that will be of interest to the average reader. The entire list will be available in pamphlet form early in April.

Book-selection committees are now being formed and will be announced shortly. Publishers are invited to send titles of any of their books that fall into these categories to Mrs. William L. Duffy, Director of Religious Book Week at the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, who will forward the suggestions to the proper committee.

#### 1945 READING INTERESTS

Careers and big money don't interest the homing veteran as much as security and independence, according to reports on 1945 reading interests received by the American Library Association from 150 public libraries in communities of all sizes and types, and in all parts of the United States. Discharged servicemen are coming to the library for vocational information at the rate of one hundred a week in Boston. The Detroit Public Library reports from sixty-five to seventy-five calls a day for information on the GI Bill of Rights, suitable training schools, college entrance requirements. The general impression of librarians reporting is that the veterans are taking time to make up their minds. Even the men and women who have made plans while in service are checking carefully in books and other reference tools to be sure about their personal qualifications, equipment needed, and prospects for success.

Small business and farming are the two predominant interests. Libraries have found it impossible to meet demand for books in these fields.

Library service in all fields is being heavily influenced by the returning veteran. Although librarians agree that readers whom they knew before their army service have not changed their general reading likes and dislikes, they believe that tastes have deepened and matured.

Home interests are paramount for the mass of American public library users. Every library reporting finds an overwhelming demand for books on house planning and remodeling, interior decoration and home repairs. The day after food rationing was repealed, one branch of the Chicago Public Library was cleaned out of cook books within a few hours. Nobody wants war books except those who were not engaged in it and didn't keep up with the news. There has been much interest in the atomic bomb, mostly among curious teen agers and the older readers who are concerned with its moral and social implications.

New developments in science and their industrial application are bringing many business men to libraries.

Library use all over the country is on the upgrade. After a wartime slump, nine percent of the libraries report that circulation of books is back to pre-war levels. Fifty percent report large increases, while thirty percent are holding their own.

#### LECTURE SERIES

The first of the 1946 series of six lectures sponsored by the Friends of the Library of the University of Portland will open January 15 and close February 19. Reverend Regis H. Riter, C.S.C., will deliver the addresses which will cover the different branches of philosophy.

#### FILMS PRESENTED BY TELEVISION

A series of fifteen films, produced by the Yale University Press and designed to re-create events of outstanding importance in American history from Columbus to Appomattox, will be presented over the National Broadcasting Company's television station WNBT. The series was begun on December 6.

Keyed to the theme that Americans of all ages can better understand their land if they have a firm understanding of its rich heritage, the films are titled "The Chronicles of America Photoplays". Their production was controlled and supervised by members of the Departments of History and Education at Yale. Years of preparation and research were devoted to making the films accurate for each period depicted. The photoplays are authentic reconstructions of important milestones throughout the development of our nation. Many expert authorities from different parts of the country assisted the editors and research staff in re-creating the happenings of the past.

#### L.C. ACQUIRES MILITARY DOCUMENTS

An important collection of manuscripts in the field of military history, the papers of General John Leonard Hines, former Chief of Staff, U. S. Army, has been acquired by the Library of Congress. The collection was presented to the Library as a gift from General Hines.

Because of the personal nature of much of the material included, the Hines papers will be closed to the use of readers until five years after the General's death. General Hines has, however, authorized the Library of Congress staff to proceed to arrange and record them for eventual public use.

## LIBRARY OF THE POPES

(Concluded from page 117)

generosity of the Catholic Church and the co-operation of American technique and resources will bring about a type of service hitherto undreamed of. The result cannot be otherwise than the promotion of mutual harmony and understanding in the field of international scholarship.

## FORBIDDEN BOOKS IN A HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

(Continued from page 111)

are not published for the high school age; but care must be exercised that they do not slip into our collections.

The Church has formulated these principles to govern Catholics in their reading. But in addition to these principles we, like all other men, have the natural law to guide us. The natural law forbids us to read any book which is a proximate occasion of sin. Once a person discovers that the material which he is reading is a proximate occasion of sin, then he is obliged at once to close the covers of the book. Applying this rule to our high school libraries, we can realize that certain adult novels and other classes of books may be licit for married people but will very likely be proximate occasions of sin for adolescents.

Accordingly, the *Index* will confront the Catholic high school librarian with two general problems. One is to select the proper new books for the collection. This obligation is not too difficult because we have adequate guidance from book reviews in Catholic periodicals and from such excellent organs as *Books on Trial* and *Best Sellers*.

But a much more laborious task is to survey our present holdings in a determination to weed out undesirable and

forbidden books. Here the criterion must be the application of the general principles outlined in this paper. They are not too profound, and, once mastered, they will help us to rid our libraries not merely of much useless lumber but especially of unsuspected and insidious poison. These same admonitions apply to donations of old books presented to the library by request. Not infrequently these accumulations of old books contain trashy and positively dangerous material. Before accessioning any of these legacies, let us carefully examine them to discover their real worth. Only after we have ascertained that these contributions add real value to our holdings, should they be cataloged.

If it is required to keep forbidden books in a library, they must be placed as a general rule, under lock and key.<sup>3</sup> However, it would appear that there are no justifying motives for high school librarians to preserve prohibited books. Their students are not engaged in that type of research which would give them reason to request permission from the proper authorities. Nor does it appear necessary for high school teachers to use them in their work. Therefore, the high school librarian has a simple answer to this problem—*viz.*, simply to destroy all forbidden books by any convenient method.

It would be an unpardonable error if I were to leave you with the impression that this paper presents an exhaustive study of the *Index*. That task would require much more time than has been placed at my disposal. But I believe that this paper will furnish the high school librarian with the most important principles necessary for his special duties. If

3. See "Proper Care of Prohibited Books" in *The Catholic Library World*, vol. 14, p. 19.

he conscientiously employs these principles in selecting books for his library, he can rest assured that he has fulfilled his duty.

### BOOK PARTY FOR OUR LADY

(Continued from page 120)

before proved to be one of Bruce's best sellers?

Moreover, in the eyes of Frank Bruce, the autograph party was to be a testing ground for Catholic bookselling in Dayton. In a letter to Mr. Sharkey he had written "that the incident of *After Bernadette* was not so important; that this was missionary work for Catholic bookselling in Dayton".

The missionary work of *After Bernadette* will, it seems, bear abundant fruit. The big turnout of people and the quick sellout of books must certainly have given Miss Wise the impression that Catholic books will sell in this city. No doubt, on her recommendation, Rike-Kumler's will be only too happy to make provision for Catholic books of all kinds. Whereas they have hitherto carried only a few tremendously popular titles, such as Spellman's *Risen Soldier* and Murphy's *Scarlet Lily*, they will feel inclined to think that henceforth it will pay to add other titles and carry them in a regular Catholic Book Department. My own hopes in this direction run high, for Miss Wise was delighted with the sample copies of *The Catholic Library World*, *Books on Trial* and *Best Sellers*, which I had given her.

The autograph party was above all a success, a signal triumph, for Our Lady. Her love-story of Lourdes will be spread far and wide as a result of it. The night following the party, the husband of a woman who had purchased *After Bernadette* stayed up until 3 A. M., fascinated to the end by the wonderful things related and described therein. This absorbing interest on the part of readers, was, I know, typical. Many expressions of enthusiasm, not only on the part of Catholics but also of non-Catholics, have been made to the author and to the present writer. Let one instance suffice, that of the non-Catholic psychologist who, with Mr. Sharkey, serves on the Dayton Board of Child Guidance. Having purchased the book at the party, she read it through at the first opportunity. She was so impressed that she passed it on to friend after friend, every one of whom was in turn enthusiastic as she had been.

Perhaps other cities will like to follow the example in Catholic book promotion set by the Dayton autograph party. If your city cannot boast a flourishing Catholic author, why not borrow one from a city nearby? The careful planning done by Miss Wise, Mr. Bruce, and Mr. Sharkey might well serve as a model. The fact that the book which was autographed had Our Lady for its subject insured a special blessing from her on the Dayton party. But she will be glad to bless any autograph party that endeavors to promote the sale of Catholic books which sincerely and artistically proclaim the life-lessons and teachings of her divine Son.

# New Books

## BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS Catholic Book of the Month— December

McMAHON, FRANCIS E. *A Catholic looks at the world.* Vanguard, 1945. 334p. \$2.75.

A provocative study of contemporary problems in the light of Christian principles. A challenge to Catholics to act in accordance with their beliefs and to be less apathetic toward the application of the Christian remedy which is the hope of the world. No Catholic who would grasp the seriousness of his personal responsibility for world order should miss Dr. McMahon's book.

### Biography

BULMAN, DAVID, Ed. *Molders of opinion.* Bruce, 1945. 166p. \$1.75.

An edited and revised collection of articles which originally appeared in *The Sign*, dealing with the background, methods, and philosophy of well-known news and radio commentators and columnists.

Leonard Wolf, Ph.D.

### Fiction

O'GRADY, P. W. and DOROTHY DUNN. *Dark was the wilderness.* Bruce, 1945. 271p. \$2.50.

This historical novel, based on the Jesuit Relations, tells the story of the Jesuit missions among the Hurons in the Georgian Bay section in the early seventeenth century. It centers around the lives of two Indian brothers mentioned in the Relations and of our canonized North American Martyrs, St. Isaac Jogues, St. Jean de Brebeuf and their six saintly companions. The story is vividly told, and gives a stirring picture of the problems of the missionaries as they faced the wilderness and paganism.

Charles G. McManus, S.J.

WAUGH, EVELYN. *Brideshead revisited.* Little, Brown and Co., 1945. 351p. \$2.50.

With *Brideshead revisited* Major Waugh climbs from the tonic comic plane where, in the Thirties, he used to reign supreme, into the three dimensions of the true novel. Prophecy is risky, but excellence bears a certain hallmark that cannot be denied; and *Brideshead* may well end among the great novels of the first half of the present century. At all events, this story of adultery and penitence, of

expiated sin and callous transgression within the ranks of those "hollow men" like Rex Mottram for whom there can be no real sin, for there is neither knowledge nor responsibility, must be recognized as one of the finest Catholic novels in the language. Parents and teachers should realize, however, that its appreciation demands an armor of mature experience which adolescents do not possess.

Charles A. Brady

### Juvenile

CHARITINA, SISTER MARY, B.V.M. *The adventures of the Redcrosse Knight.* Illus. by Jeanyee Wong. Sheed and Ward, 1945. 110p. \$3.00.

How Redcrosse fought the dragon of Error, was ensnared by the falsehood of Duessa and entrapped in the House of Pride, and other adventures retold in simple English, for children of eight to twelve, from the first book of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The illustrations in color are a perfect complement to the well-adapted text.

E. P. Willging

CHARITAS, SISTER MARY, S.S.N.D. *The man who built the secret door.* Bruce, 1945. 130p. \$1.50.

St. Joseph introduces the ten saints whose stories are charmingly and humanly told for the emulation of the young reader, who is made conscious of Joseph's power to open to every earnest soul the secret door to the interior life. Fittingly, the author climaxes the sketches with the story of Mary, the perfect creature and Mother of all who enter into life eternal. For the intermediate grades.

LAMERS, MARY. *Cottage on the curve.* Bruce, 1945. 222p. \$1.75.

Fun with the Murray family that will bring enjoyment to the boys and girls from nine to twelve as they share an interesting home life enlivened by countless escapades.

O'NEIL, JOSEPHINE M. *Our Lady and the Aztec.* St. Anthony Guild Press, 1945. 72p. \$1.00.

A simple account of the apparition of Our Lady to the Mexican child, Juan Diego. The story and colorful illustrations will appeal to the six-to-ten year olds.

ROSE, MARY CATHERINE. *Above the blue.* Pictures by Ruth Ruhman, Bruce, 1945. 48p. \$1.75.

Parties and holidays and holidays, and the joy they bring to the young folks in heaven. St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Martha and the other saints are at the service of the young favorites of the King and Queen. The illustrations suggest the *Ars Sacra* figures. An ideal gift for the four-to-seven year old.

### Literature

CHAVEZ, FRAY ANGELICO, O.F.M. *Eleven Lady-lyrics and other poems*. St. Anthony Guild Press, 1945. 96p. \$1.25.

Out of the darkness of sleepless nights as a military chaplain Fray Angelico has evolved some of his loveliest poems. The eleven lyrics to Our Lady are set as frames about lesser verse. Perhaps Fray Angelico's gift is most successful in his lightest moments, such as "To a Fly", with its inimitable humor and reverence commingled. Yet few lyrics I know rival his final "Lyric-Lady".

Sister Mary David, S.S.N.D.

HOPKINS, GERARD MANLEY. *Selections from the notebooks of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by T. Weiss. Norfolk, Connecticut, New Directions, 1945. (31p) \$1.00.

The editor cites selections of prose poetry from Hopkins' note-books to show that there is a continuity in the poet's apprenticeship. The passages illustrate the poet's tendency to see the world in terms of the human body and its properties and to breathe life and song into them by patient self-effacement. They also illustrate Hopkins' devotion to his surroundings and his mastery of diction and word painting. The few selections scarcely substantiate the editor's interpretation of Hopkins' attitude toward people.

A. J. Miller, S.J.

### Religion

KEARNEY, JOHN, C.S.Sp. *My spiritual exercises. Material for meditation on the principal exercises of piety*. Kenedy, 1945. 272p. \$2.25.

Originally intended for Religious, these meditations have been broadened so as to be of interest to all who are trying to lead a fervent spiritual life. In great part the spiritual doctrine is that of Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis de Sales. Particularly worthy of note are the chapters on Liturgical Prayer and on the spirit of Prayer. Throughout the book there is displayed a fine sense for joining immediate practical application to sound theory. Useful summaries will be found at the end of most chapters.

R. J. Neu, S.J.

TENNEN, REV. MARK. *Chungking listening post*. Creative Age, 1945. 201p. \$2.50.

This account of the experiences of missionaries in war-torn China should be read by every American Catholic. It is a record of unselfish devotion to their people, of heroic service, of superhuman courage and of indescribable suffering. Written by a man at the center of wartime missionary activity, it is authoritative in its detailed description of the activities of the missionaries.

Leonard Wolf, Ph.D.

*Liber Psalmorum cum canticis Breviarii Romani*. Professorum Pontificii Instituti Biblici. Benziger, 1945. 347p. \$2.50.

This new Latin translation of the Psalms, commissioned by Pope Pius XII and prepared by the Pontifical Biblical Institute, constitutes a major landmark in the history of Biblical studies. Its purpose, as stated by the Holy Father in his *Motu Proprio*, is to provide a version which will be free, as far as possible, from the "obscurities and errors" of the Latin translation now in use, and will "show forth clearly the meaning and sense of the Psalms". The new text, with its vastly increased clarity, admirably fulfills the Holy Father's aims, and will be a source of joy and inspiration to all who use the Latin Psalter. Use of the new version for public and private recitation of the Divine Office is granted by the Holy Father as soon as the official adaptation for use in the breviary is published. Each Psalm is preceded by a short outline of the thought and explanatory footnotes have been added. The book has a brief introduction discussing the nature and history of the Psalms.

Charles G. McManus, S.J.

LAWRENCE OF THE RESURRECTION, BROTHER. *The practice of the presence of God*. Translated by Sister Mary David, S.S.N.D. Newman Book Shop, 1945. 127p. \$2.25.

Translation of the spiritual maxims and letters of Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, dis-carded Carmelite lay-brother. Published together with the testimony of M. L'Abbe Joseph de Beaufort. Reviews the evidences of the high degree of sanctity which Brother Lawrence attained through his simple and devout contemplation of the presence of God.

### BOOKS . . .

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